

Americans Freed by Soviets 'Weren't Just Tourists'

2 Deny Pleading Guilty as Spies

CPYRIGHT

VIENNA, Oct. 18 (UPI) — Two American tourists expelled from the Soviet Union strongly denied today they pleaded guilty to charges of espionage before a Soviet military court.

Mark Kaminsky, 32, of Jefferson Township, Mich., and Harvey Bennett, 26, of Bath, Me., told newsmen at the U.S. Consulate here they were thrown out of Russia after seven weeks of detention in Kiev and Uzhgorod.

Mr. Kaminsky said earlier the Soviet military trial that sentenced him to seven years' imprisonment "was like all Soviet trials — guilty until proven innocent."

NOT A TOURIST

Mr. Kaminsky said he pleaded guilty to the official charge of "collecting material and conducting activities incompatible with those of a regular tourist."

"Since they had all my films and notes on military activities," he said, "it was obvious that I was not simply a tourist."

Mr. Bennett denied reports by the official Soviet news agency Tass, that he denounced Mr. Kaminsky before the military court which tried him on Sept. 12.

"I simply agreed that per-

haps we were not normal tourists," he said. "However, when I asked them what they considered normal tourists, they simply pointed at us and said, 'You are not.'"

TELL OF ARREST

Mr. Kaminsky and Mr. Bennett arrived here this morning. The men said they were "very happy to talk to an American again." They said they said they had been arrested and taken to Kiev in the Ukraine. Mr. Kaminsky said he was jailed for seven weeks, while Mr. Bennett spent the time in a Kiev hotel.

Mr. Bennett said he was treated "all right" in the hotel and Mr. Kaminsky said his Soviet jailers treated him "very well . . . surprisingly well."

Both said they had no idea why they were released. "It is a mystery to us," said Mr. Bennett.

They said they planned to take the first plane out of Vienna for the United States.

(In Moscow the Soviet trade union newspaper Trud said Mr. Kaminsky, like U-2 pilot Francis Powers, had spied because he was mercenary. The newspaper carried a photograph of Mr. Kaminsky's notes and described him as "a little ground Powers.")

Mr. Kaminsky said he planned originally to tour Russia for five weeks, to gather information for a book

to show that the Soviet Union continually talks about peace but is preparing for war.

He said the Northcraft Educational Fund in Philadelphia granted him and Mr. Bennett each a \$2000 scholarship to finance the trip.

The two Americans said they had not been "brain-washed," altho some of the earlier questioning sessions had gone on for eight hours at a stretch. They said Soviet guards told them that their sentence would be made lighter if they pleaded guilty.

Mr. Kaminsky and Mr. Bennett said they first picked up when they tried to leave Russia via an exit point on the

Czech border. They said that despite earlier clearance from the official Soviet travel agency, Intourist, they found the area to be stricted.

They said that in Uzhgorod, near the Czech border, police detained them "until we clear up the subject matter in your film."

They said this detention, which amounted to house arrest in a hotel, lasted for nine days and then they were flown to Kiev. Mr. Kaminsky said that "altho I knew I was being tried under Article Two of the Soviet law and that carries the death sentence, I was repeatedly assured by the Russians that they would not execute me."



HARVEY BENNETT

He said that the prosecutor even told him: "Keep your head up Kaminsky, you're not going to die here."